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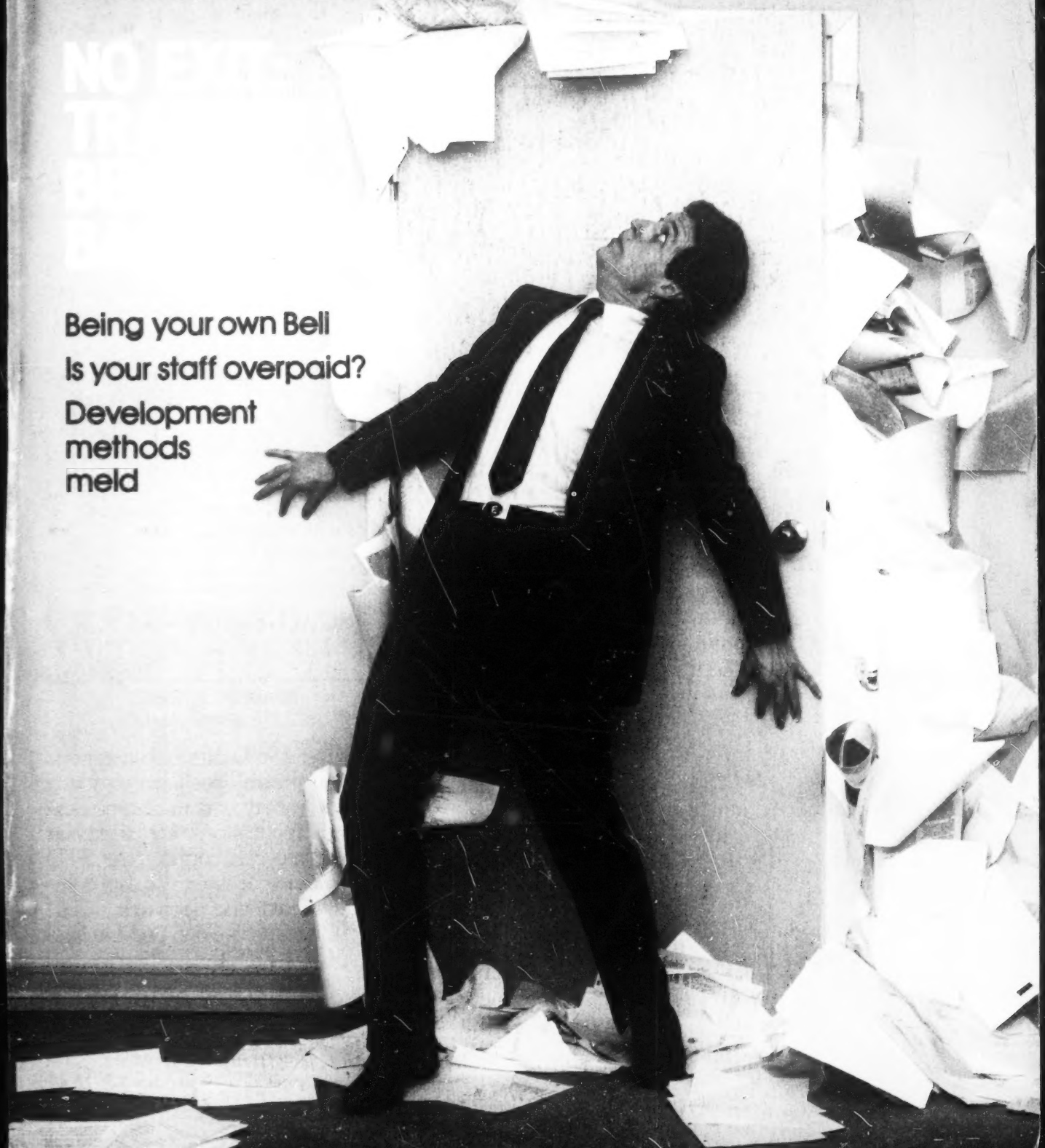

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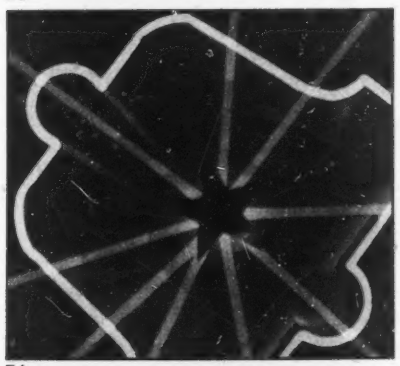

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FEATURES

60 **Cover Story**

MIS/dp trapped behind backlogs/*David Roman* As quickly as managers cut through backlogs with software productivity tools, end users find ways to generate new application requests. Part I of a four-part series.

68 Where the money goes/*David Roman* Lower inflation has held down salary increases for MIS/dp staff, but some organizations still give dp-ers special treatment. Part II of our annual Salary-Status Survey.

74 Should you be your own Bell?/*Gary Stix* Corporations can go into the long-distance business for themselves with the economies of distance and transmission T-1 mux/switches offer.

DEPARTMENTS

6 Letters

12 Insight/Alternatives to IBM

16 News Scan

18 News & Comment/IBM's DB2 may not be as fast as some other DBMSs, but it sure looks as though it's overtaking IMS.

30 Application/Alcoa rates vendors' mettle.

32 Personal Computing/Price incentives are bringing plotters into the mainstream of micro peripherals.

38 Strictly Software/A dash of structured methodology and a pinch of prototyping make a powerful system-development scheme.

42 Data Communications/Corporations could pay more for private lines and bypass if the Bell operating companies get new access charge schemes.

48 Following the Leaders/Apple Computer seeks corporate customers.

54 Office Automation/Users define the terms of longevity for OA vendors and predict which will be the survivors of 1991.

58 Training/Structured training for the corps at the core—the data center staff.

87 Products/Data Comm; Software

86 Advertiser Index

WHERE THE MONEY GOES

Part II: Lower inflation has held down salary increases for staff, but some dp-ers still get special treatment.

by David Roman, Associate Editor

MIS/dp professionals continue to receive annual salary increases that are higher than the rate of inflation. Last year, the typical raise for a dp pro was 7 percent, according to *Computer Decisions'* seventh annual Salary-Status Survey. For most of last year, the rate of inflation was less than 4 percent.

However, as inflation cooled last year, MIS/dp staffers at all levels felt the pinch. Inflation has always helped determine the size of raises, according to a spokesman for Source Edp, a Mountain View, CA-based placement service for data processing personnel. "Inflation isn't as high as it has been in the past," says Michael Meldahl, manager of information systems for the Montana Power Co., Butte. And neither are increases. "On average, we gave 6 percent increases last year," says Meldahl. "A few years ago, we were giving raises that ranged from 9 percent to 11 percent."

In the days of double-digit inflation, steep dp salary increases looked higher, but, like today's, were rarely more than a few percentage points above the inflation rate, according to one tracker of dp salaries in the Midwest. "The real increases are the same now as they were then," he says.

If the annual jumps in dp salaries of the past were not extraordinary, they were still, in some organizations, bigger than the raises received by other employees. The practice continues today. "Our increases were probably a half percent higher than what other Montana Power employees received," says Meldahl.

The special hikes in dp salaries may indicate the department's importance to the organization, or they may be the employer's attempt to discourage job hopping. "I don't want anyone on our staff to have to leave the company to get a raise," says Ken Caracci, director of information systems for General Homes Corp., a Houston-based land developer. Caracci's staff received 10 percent raises last year; most other General Home employees drew 7 per-

cent increases. "A high salary won't completely satisfy a worker, but a low salary can be a hell of a dissatisfier," Caracci says.

An organization needs to offer generous compensation to attract the best talent on the market, Caracci says. Technicians with uncommon expertise receive the highest salaries. Last year, experts in telecommunications, micro-to-mainframe communications, and relational database applications were most sought after, according to Source Edp. "We pay a little more to employees with special skills," says Montana Power's Meldahl. "In our shop, somebody who can build relational databases and write the applications to make them perform is in the highest demand."

Dp shops have long been considered free of sex discrimination that might affect salaries, but *Computer Decisions*' survey found that organizations with only women in a particular position pay them less than the reported overall median for that same position. This was true for 80 percent of the positions for which salary data were collected. Although differences in education, experience, and age, which may lower women's median salaries, could not be taken into account, the pattern showing lower pay for women suggests that equal pay for equal work is not the rule in the dp profession. "It's generally believed that data-processing jobs aren't sex typed, and that whoever is good gets paid well, because workers are in such demand," says Myra Strober, a professor of economics at Stanford (CA) University's School of Education. "But that's not true." Strober examined salary data collected for the 1980 U.S. Census and discovered that—holding education and age constant—women dp professionals earned 12 percent to 20 percent less than men in similar positions. In the entire labor force, the census found that women generally earned 40 percent less than men. Strober says "women do somewhat better" in data processing positions.

The Salary-Status Survey found that the comparative value of various MIS/dp workers to their employees hasn't changed. The typical manager of systems analysis continues to make more than the typical database manager, who continues to make more than the typical communications manager, and so on down the line.

A great disparity in salaries was reported for the user-support coordinator, the survey job title that corresponds most closely to that of information center director. The median salary for the position last year was $26,389. In the Northeast, the median salary for user-support coordinators was $37,000, or 40 percent higher than the overall median. Coordinators in Washington typically earned

(Continued on page 87)

WHAT SUPERVISORS GROSS

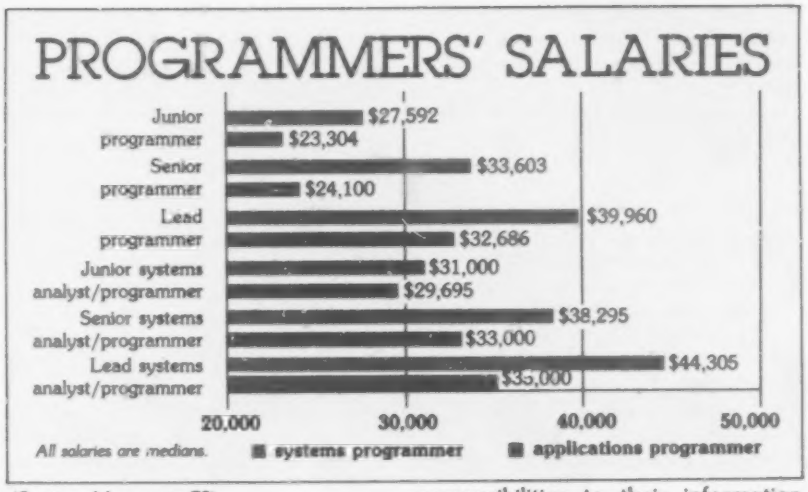
Position	1984	1985
Systems analysis/systems programming manager/supervisor	$42,000	$40,000
Systems analysis/applications programming manager/supervisor	$38,629	$41,582
Systems programming manager/supervisor	$38,502	$39,603
Systems analysis manager/supervisor	$37,876	$40,000
Applications programming manager/supervisor	$37,500	$37,000
Assistant data processing manager	$36,750	$37,845
Database manager	$35,663	$38,500
Communications manager	$34,400	$34,740
Operations manager/supervisor	$31,997	$29,000
Documentation supervisor	NA	$26,420
Input/output control manager/supervisor	$19,750	$22,000
Key entry supervisor	$18,000	$19,000

All salaries are medians. *NA: Not available*

WHAT STAFFERS GROSS

Position	1984	1985
Project/team leader	$38,750	$41,200
Database analyst/programmer	$36,000	$37,000
Lead systems programmer	$36,300	$39,960
Senior systems programmer	$30,357	$33,603
Junior systems programmer	$23,115	$27,592
Lead systems analyst	$35,202	$35,000
Senior systems analyst	$33,250	$34,000
Junior systems analyst	$27,500	$24,000
Lead systems analyst/systems programmer	$34,000	$44,305
Senior systems analyst/systems programmer	$31,000	$38,295
Junior systems analyst/systems programmer	$24,000	$31,000
Lead systems analyst/applications programmer	$34,000	$35,000
Senior systems analyst/applications programmer	$29,431	$33,000
Junior systems analyst/applications programmer	$24,629	$29,695
Lead applications programmer	$32,000	$32,686
Senior applications programmer	$26,904	$24,100
Junior applications programmer	$22,000	$23,304
User-support coordinator	$24,000	$26,389
Documentation specialist	$17,068	$18,000
Communications operator	$20,965	$22,000
Input/output control clerk	$15,123	$17,392
Lead computer operator	$19,240	$20,816
Senior computer operator	$17,673	$17,790
Junior computer operator	$16,603	$14,875
Tape librarian	$13,500	$16,000
Lead key-entry operator	$16,000	$18,673
Senior key-entry operator	$13,312	$16,893
Junior key-entry operator	$12,000	$12,098

All salaries are medians.



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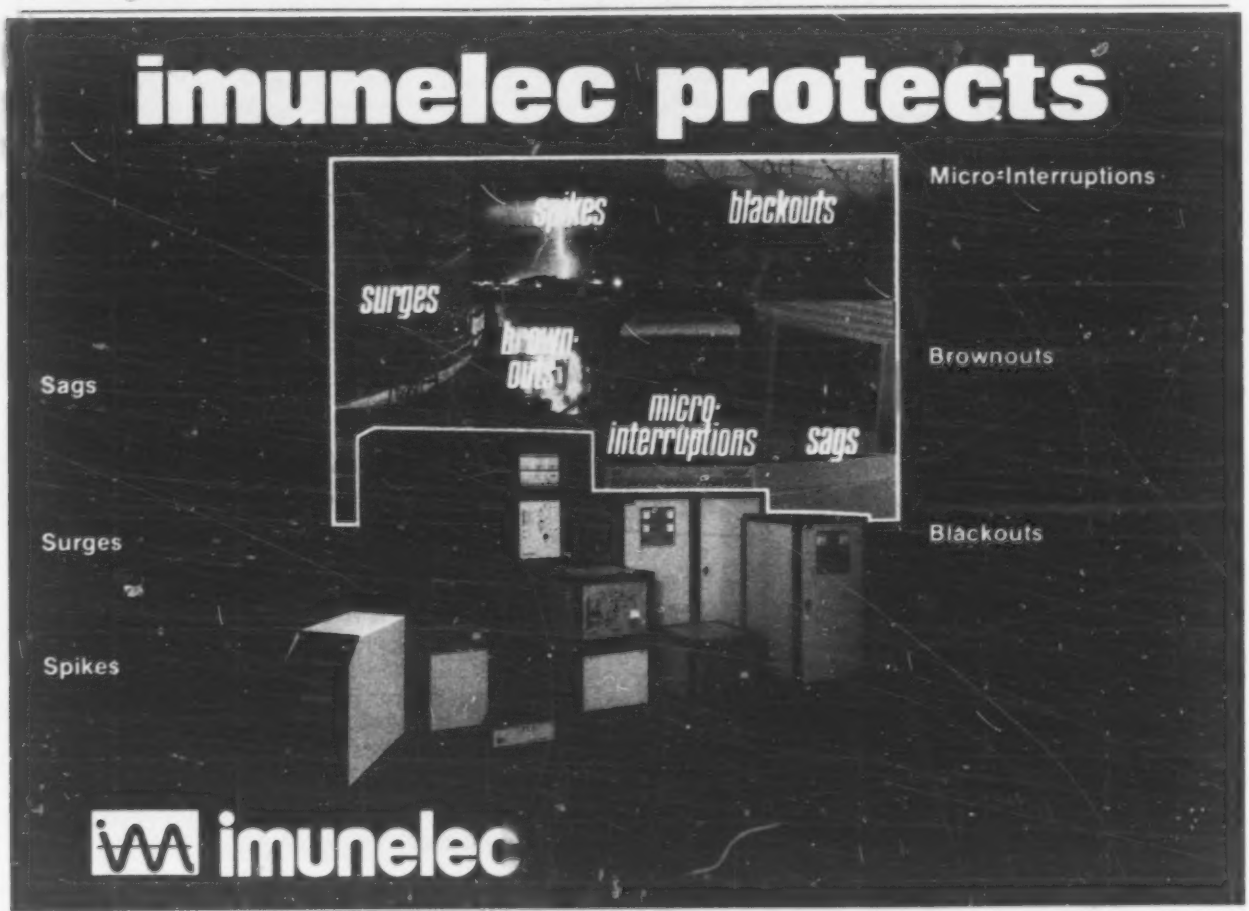
$16,250 last year, or 40 percent less than the median, and less than half of what their counterparts in the Northeast made. Salaries tend to vary by region, type of organization, and so forth, but, obviously, the salary data also indicate that different organizations assign different values and responsibilities to their information center directors, or user-support coordinators.

"The information center at one organization could provide different kinds of support than the information center at another organization," says Bruce Soderling, general manager of Source Edp. "The workers may be technicians, or may have just a smattering of technology."

Michael Meldahl says that in Montana Power's information center, which is in charge of bringing microcomputers into the utility and implementing a micro-to-mainframe link, the staff's salaries vary widely, depending in part on an employee's technical expertise.

Information center staff salaries may continue to remain inconsistent from organization to organization. In general, experts expect MIS/dp staff salaries should grow at last year's rate through at least the end of the decade. Salary increases won't, however, return the substantial rates common in the inflationary early 1980s. "We're in for a long period of stability," says Meldahl. "Everybody is striving for that." □

Computer Decisions' Salary-Status Survey was conducted by Abbott, Langer & Associates, Crete, IL. For information call (312) 672-4200.



CIRCLE 37